

John Allen
Thursday, February 23, 2017
DDS Cuts

Good evening,

My name is John Allen, I am an IFS Family Support Worker in the North Region.

Thank you to the co-chairs, Senator Osten, Senator Formica, and Representative Walker, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee.

I am testifying today to urge the committee to reject the cuts that the Governor has proposed to DDS in his budget. However, the Governor's budget touches on the need to provide more services to the waiting list. I believe it makes sense to increase the number of IFS workers to help accomplish this goal.

I, along with my fellow DDS Family Support Workers are in several homes where the caregivers are elderly- often in their seventies or eighties. They have difficulty caring for their adult children with developmental disability. We may assist them with direct care- such as bathing or grooming, taking the individual to medical appointments, or into the community for recreation. We have also done this for parents who have had to go into the hospital for surgery and need help with their child while they are recuperating.

Sometimes the parents have their own issues which compromise their ability to provide care. We have worked with parents that have had mental health issues, physical and medical issues, as well as financial limitations. We have worked in many nice homes. We have also worked in homes with hoarding and in homes with infestation.

In my job, I have brought people from alleged abusive situations to safe houses. I have worked and am working with DDS clients whose parents have gone into a long term care facility leaving them home alone.

What I have described is just some of what we do as the Family Support Workers as we adapt to the needs of each situation presented to us. Going into homes, I see the overwhelming need first hand.

I urge you to disregard the cuts requested in the Governor's budget and work with us going forward to find a way to help us provide the best care to our families. Please do plan to add more Family Support Workers to the budget.